

1501/47

THE
R E G E N C Y;

A P O E M.

[PRICE TWO SHILLINGS AND SIXPENCE.]



T H E
R E G E N C Y;
A P O E M.

Οὐ γὰρ πῶ σάφει ἰδμεν ὅπως ἔσται ταῦτα ἔργα
ἢ εὖ - ἢ κακῶς. — HOMER.

Up Vanity!

Down royal state! all you sage counsellors, hence!
And to the English Court assemble now,
From every region, apes of idleness!
Now, neighbour Confines, purge you of your scum:
Have you a ruffian, that will swear, drink, dance,
Revel the night; rob, murder, and commit
The oldest sins the newest kind of ways?
Be happy, he will trouble you no more;
England shall double gild his treble guilt;
England shall give him office, honour, might:

Shakespeare's Henry the Fourth.

L O N D O N:

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ROYAL-EXCHANGE.

1789.



THE
R E G E N C Y.

IN this sad time of tribulation,
When politics confound the nation,
And men their pity share between
A KING distrest and injur'd QUEEN ;
When disobedience on a throne,
Would rob a father of his own ;
Preserve us, Heav'n ! from any evil,
And machinations of the Devil.

B

On

On England's throne, in deep debate,
Great Britain's new-made REGENT sat : 19
His party friends, dispos'd around,
With joy made *Carlton House* resound.
BRITANNIA trembled o'er his head,
And mourn'd her fate,—in silent dread
Left this corrupt administration
Should taint the glory of her nation;
When, suddenly, to all his clan
His Royal Highness thus began :

“ Enough, my friends, you've giv'n to joy ;
“ Excess of pleasure soon will cloy. 20
“ Hear me, just hear me with attention,
“ While I reveal my fix'd intention.”
He spoke :—At once the venal band
Obey the REGENT's dread command ;
Each heart with expectation beats,
While swift they hurry to their seats.



The

The silence now his Highness broke,
And thus in joyful accents spoke :

“ My Lords and Gentlemen, who here
“ Assembled at my nod appear ; 30
“ This day the rod of pow’r transfers
“ From all my father’s ministers :
“ This day shall I my vengeance fate
“ On all the officers of state ;
“ Whose influence near five years, have I
“ Regarded with a jealous eye.
“ First, I’ll reduce that upstart, PITT,
“ From stations which he does not fit,
“ (But which you all would envy here)
“ To poor three hundred pounds a year. 40
“ What argues greater want of sense
“ Than his absurd improvidence ?
“ What could prevent him, like Lord NORTH,
“ From getting some life-place of worth ?

" I wonder he did not secure
 " A snug, convenient finecure.
 " A man in power, doubtless, ought
 " To be possess'd of greater thought.
 " The fellow now, I'm sure, regrets
 " He e'er refus'd to pay my debts ;
 " And well must wonder how he chose
 " My royal pleasure to oppose.
 " It was not him I wish'd to rob,
 " A tax or two would do the job.
 " Besides, too, he must surely own
 " I'm *Heir Apparent* to the Crown ;
 " And if I chuse to have my will,
 " 'Tis not his part to take it ill.
 " But now no more he'll play the fool,
 " When sitting on repentance' stool."

50

60

Fir'd at his words, the whole *Divan*
 Burst out in rapture, to a man :

" What

“ What eloquence ! the noble youth !

“ How well he speaks the words of truth.”

“ Once more allow me to proceed,

“ And tell you what I have decreed,”

Reply'd the PRINCE :—“ 'Tis thus, my friends,

“ 'Tis thus I mean to gain my ends.

“ Each for your several rewards

“ Apply, ye Commoners and Lords.

70

“ Though no rewards can e'er return

“ The gratitude with which I burn :

“ For ye, at first, excited strife

“ 'Twixt me and him who gave me life.

“ Ye taught me first to disobey,

“ And scorn misguided parents sway :

“ Ye taught me first to bid defiance,

“ And spurn my family alliance.

“ Then check your overflowing spirits,

“ And each one urge his greatest merits.

80

- “ For since to ye this place I owe,
 “ On ye rewards I must bestow.
 “ Then urge your claims, while I preside,
 “ And, free from prejudice, decide.

BRITANNIA, at this dread command,
 Turn'd pale, and shudder'd for the land ;
 While from the bottom of the hall
 Arose a most terrific brawl :
 For *Loughbro'* did together rise
 With *Michael Angelo* the wife ;
 (A man posses'd of talents bright,
 Son to *Sir Robert Taylor*, Knight)
 And both at once petition'd for
 The place of England's *Chancellor* ;
 A place, which both their thoughts inspir'd,
 And both for ages had desir'd.
Loughbro' indignant beyond measure,
 Sat down in haste, and growl'd displeasure.

90

For

For *Taylor's* noise and overbearing,
 Spite of their patience, got an hearing. 100

" Your Royal Highness sure will first
 " Hear the best speaker,—then the worst.
 " What though his Lordship's name is great,
 " And justly famous in debate ;

" Yet what can prompt him to compare
 " His talents with Sir *Robert's Heir* ?
 " What tho' in sly, insidious cunning,
 " He'd rival *Erskine*, *Burke*, or *Dunning*,

" Yet still with this so specious plea,
 " He never, sure, can rival me : 110

" His haughty claims he must withdraw,
 " For I'm a *chicken* in the law.

" And shall a fusty Judge pretend
 " With youth and vigour to contend ?
 " Vigour and youth will wanted be
 " T' oppose the jostled ministry.

" I've witness'd many such-like scenes,
 " Sub-chairman of the Ways and Means.

" Consider,

“ Confider, Sir, how you decide;

“ It was for this I chang’d my fide ;

120

“ It was for this, (I’ll tell you flat)

“ I hazarded the name of *Rat*.

“ Know *Taylor* never will be jeer’d ;

“ And *Taylor*’s speeches must be fear’d.

“ Beware then, Sir, how you provoke,

“ And turn a *Taylor* into joke.”

So down he fat :—One minute after,

Unable to conceal their laughter,

(Though tir’d to death with such a *bore*)

The Council burst into a roar.

130

But *Loughbro’*, who with angry eye,

Unmov’d by laughter, had fat by,

Impatient rose,—and with a frown,

Claim’d the first office of the Crown!

“ Was it for this I cross’d the Tweed,

“ And quitted affluence for need ?

“ Was it for this my time I spent

“ In deep fallacious argument ?

“ Was

" Was it for this my fame I lost,
 " In faction's stormy tempest tost ? 140
 " For this I quoted, spite of sense,
 " Imaginary precedents ?
 " And tried to prove that England's throne
 " Was not King GEORGE's, but your own ?
 " Does this your love for me evince ?
 " (To you I speak,—to you, my Prince)
 " To suffer this conceited beast,
 " Of men the filliest and the least,
 " With *Loughbro's* Baron to contend ?
 " If so, our friendship here will end. 150
 " If I succeed not, free from strife,
 " I'll sink into a Judge's life ;
 " For precedents on Juries call,
 " Attend *Old Bailey* and *Guildhall*.
 " No more shall *Porchester* complain
 " That criminals like sheep are slain ;
 " For whatsoever crime's committed,
 " The prisoner shall be acquitted ;

" And turn'd adrift at my command,
 " Shall prove a pest to all this land : 160
 " Thus shall the Regent not elude
 " The vengeance for ingratitude.

" But I'll be cool :—If I succeed,
 " I'll help you in this time of need :
 " I'll stick at neither sense or law,
 " So I become but Chancellor.
 " I'll combat *Pittites* by whole herds,
 " And stun e'en *Thurlow* with my words.
 " I'll bow before you as a God ;
 " The Seals too shall obey your nod ; 170
 " I'll do the best I can to please :
 " My hopes are great—my merits these."

" 'Tis well," reply'd the PRINCE, " 'tis well :
 " You, *Loughborough*, have borne the bell.
 " In this sad national distress,
 " You can alone the Woolpack press.

" But,

“ But, *Taylor*, be not you offended,
 “ Tho’ *Loughbro’* we have thus commended ;
 “ In this great Lottery of places,
 “ You’ll see how you are in our graces.”

“ Thanks to my Liege,—so kind, so just !”
 “ Quoth *Taylor*, smoth’ring his disgust.
 “ What place I have I car’n’t a fouse :
 “ The Speakership of either House,
 “ Or any other place as little,
 “ Would fuit my genius to a tittle.
 “ My motive is not want of pelf ;
 “ My wish is to be near yourself.”

“ Next,” said the PRINCE, “ the next in course is
 “ *Paymaster-Gen’ral of the Forces*.
 “ So let each candidate apply,
 “ While I their sev’ral merits try.”

- “ Up then starts *Sheridan*, and cries
 “ Its mine, dear Sir, its mine the prize.
 “ No other candidate, I see,
 “ Will dare oppose himself to me.
 “ No one, I’m sure, can e’er deny
 “ Its mine by right of family.
 “ My other claims I need not mention ;
 “ By ancestry I’ve clear pretension : 200
 “ As great in their respective ways
 “ As Howards, Montagues, or Greys.
 “ Besides, for writing plays and farces,
 “ My equal in the land there scarce is.
 “ Who in the House than me talks faster ?
 “ Who would do better for *Paymaster* ?
 “ Though scandalous report has said
 “ That all my debts are yet unpaid,
 “ They’re paid more punctual, I swear,
 “ Than half this Privy Council’s are. 210
 “ For though my wife, in proud array,
 “ With Devon’s Duchesse oft does play ;
 “ Yet

" Yet she, by multiplying bets,
 " Finds a sure way to pay my debts.
 " Whatever scheme you'd think expedient,
 " To execute it, I'm obedient.
 " I'd write a play, a song on Phyllis ;
 " I'd stick a knife in *Doctor Willis* ;
 " I'd dance, I'd sing, I'd cry, I'd laugh ;
 " I'd speak full five hours and an half. 220
 " Come, don't offend me; don't be rash ;
 " For, damme ! I'm in want of cash."

The REGENT now look'd round and round ;
 In vain ; no rival could be found.
 So, with an hearty, warm embrace,
 To *Sheridan* he gave the place ;
 And bade him, when the sal'ry's spent,
 Not steal above fifteen per cent.

Two nobles next apply'd to be
The First Lord of the Treasury :

230

Two

Two men of diff'rent rank and fame,
One *Portland*, *Rawdon* t'other's name.
Of whom the former first appearing,
Obtain'd the Privy Council's hearing.

“ O might I,” said his Grace, “ presume
“ To beg the knowledge of my doom ;
“ Whether (O do not think me filly)
“ I yet shall live in Piccadilly,
“ Or if, dread Sir, you think it meet
“ That I remove to *Downing-street*.
“ *Rawdon* with me now dares contend,
“ You'll not forget your older friend.
“ Confider, Sir, (nay, pray dont laugh)
“ My hand becomes the Treas'rer's staff;
“ And my abilities, no doubt,
“ Are too well known to talk about.
“ Therefore, kind Sir, in you I'll trust :
“ A new-made REGENT should be just.”

240

“ Just!

" Just!" said Lord *Rawdon* in a fury,
 " Who'd think it just in judge or jury 250
 " To hear but one side of the case,
 " And cast the other with disgrace?
 " My merits must be greater far
 " Than what the Duke of *Portland's* are.
 " What though his titles higher be,
 " Yet mine is no bad pedigree;
 " For I'm the Earl of *Moir's* son,
 " And nephew to Lord *Huntingdon*:
 " My merit can with any vie,
 " *America* can testify. 260
 " Though people do my acts abuse,
 " Indeed I've no ambitious views;
 " My only wish is, (that's the thing)
 " To serve my *Country* and my *King*.
 " So let this place reward my merit,
 " And whet my patriotic spirit."

" Excuse

“ Excuse me, gentle *Rawdon*, since
 “ ’Tis *Portland*’s due,” reply’d the PRINCE :
 “ For he has serv’d for many years
 “ His ’prenticeship amongst the Peers.” 270

“ What places now for filling wait ?
 “ The *Secretaryships* of State ;
 “ The *Ordnance* ;—and I will not mention
 “ Numbers that scarce deserve attention.
 “ Of *Ireland* let us first beware ;
 “ That nation now demands our care.
 “ Let those who wish to rule that land,
 “ Propose themselves at my command.”

This hint at once two nobles took,
 Lord *Townshend* and *Northumbria*’s Duke. 280

“ The latter caught the REGENT’S eye,
 “ And thus began in accents high :

" Do you yourself with me compare,
 " You cousin to some Greenland bear ?
 " Can you an equal lineage trace
 " With me, the chief of *Percy's* race ?
 " You don't possess sufficient spirit ;
 " For me, I am a man of merit :
 " My generosity's well known ;
 " I'm much too liberal, I own : 290
 " For e'en the poor of Westminster
 " Confess that in that point I err ;
 " And feasting all at my expence,
 " Acknowledge my benevolence.
 " For you I late did *Pitt* forsake,
 " And all my honour left at stake.
 " Though *Pitt* did break my regiment,
 " And left me want and discontent,
 " (For my estate is only clear
 " Some sixty thousand pounds a year) 300
 " If I must say so, I did barter
 " My regiment for Star and Garter.

D

" But

" But give me, gracious Liege, the place ;

" I'm sure 'twill be an act of grace."

Townshend, at this, could not restrain,
But thus bespoke him, with disdain :

" Cease, my Lord Duke, your empty prate ;

" You know I can retaliate.

" You miser, with an endless hoard,

" Who'd ever trust your crafty word ?

310

" But since your Highness may require

" Why to this office I aspire,

" I should Lieutenant be, I think,

" For this plain reason—I can drink.

" I'm priz'd in *Ireland* like a jewel ;

" For who, like me, can fight a duel ?

" Give me the place without delay ;

" I can't be lounging here all day.

" Hold, hold, my Lord !" reply'd his Highness,
 " You don't seem much oppress'd by shyness : 320
 " Learn but for once to curb your wishes,
 " Ambitious of the loaves and fishes.
 " It is, believe me, more your sphere
 " To be an humble private peer.
 " Behold this man ! How fit is he
 " For *Ireland's Lord Lieutenancy*.
 " 'To no self-praises he descends ;
 " How different from you, my friends !
 " His virtues all mankind adore ;
 " 'Tis *Spencer* :—Need I tell you more ? 330
 " You, my *Northumberland*, shall take
 " And keep the *Ordnance* for my sake.
 " But hear this single simple rule,
 " Laid down in prudence' careful school :
 " If mould'ring castles fall through age,
 " Sad marks of ancient vassalage !
 " Ne'er build them up, but let them lie ;
 " Attempt no ports to fortify ;

" And make no use of, if you can,
 " Your predecessor's foolish plan : 340
 " A plan that would have brought vexation,
 " And loss of money on the nation.
 " But, though you should not play the knave,
 " Be it your first great plan to save.

" An office new I'll now create,
 " *Keeper to prisoners of state.*
 " Much do I envy *Hastings'* case,
 " Since *Burke* alone can fill that place :
 " And *Hastings* must, of all men, own
 " How glaring *Burke's* compassion shone. 350
 " But, lest this duty should fatigue,
 " I'll give him an humane colleague ;
 " For *Grey* the female sex shall guard,
 " A sex to which he shews regard.
 " To find a man who treats the fair
 " With complaisance like his, is rare.

" And

" And Mrs. *Hastings* must confess
 " He us'd her with much tenderness,
 " When to the Lords he gave offence,
 " By paying her such compliments 360
 " As *Hastings*' self could hardly bear,
 " And modest peers refus'd to hear."

Quoth *Burke*, " Your Highness must expect
 " That we this office shall reject,
 " (For *Grey* I speak, and for myself,
 " Its not from any want of self)
 " Unless you make the sal'ry clear
 " Five or six thousand pounds a year.
 " We care not for the upper House ;
 " No, not three skips of any louse ; 370
 " Just such as people *Norfolk*'s Duke,
 " The sight of which would make you puke.
 " If, Sir, you wish me to speak true,
 " I care for nobody but you.

" While

" While you I'd have your rights enjoy,
 " Free from restrictions or alloy,
 " Its hard, that for the next half year
 " You cannot make one friend a peer.
 " Its hard, that they who're in your graces,
 " Can't occupy some patent places ;
 " Left while old *Lear* 'gain shall rise,
 " He find himself 'mongst enemies.

380

" Thanks for your wishes ; they evince
 " Your love for me," reply'd the PRINCE.
 " Excuse me, if I now delay
 " The settled order of the day ;
 " For, see ! two men appear in view,
 " To whom my warmest thanks are due.

" No more shalt thou, my *Walcot*, write
 " For mere subsistence, or for spite ;
 " No more shalt thou in hungry hour,
 " For bread abuse the regal pow'r :

390

" My

“ My favour, and an ample pension,
 “ Shall curb the reins of thy invention ;
 “ No more in *gall*, thou best of men !
 “ Against my *father* dip thy pen.
 “ Our end is gain’d :—But if again
 “ O’er *England*’s land he tries to reign,
 “ Once more to satire have recourse,
 “ And wound him with redoubled force. 400
 “ While you, my *Warren*, will prevent
 “ His executing that intent.
 “ You, I most earnestly conjure,
 “ Endeavour to prevent his cure.
 “ Try to inspire him with chagrin,
 “ Disturb his sleep, and vex the *Queen* :
 “ Use all the means that doctors can,
 “ And finish soon what you began.
 “ A patent place shall pay your merit,
 “ When I Great Britain’s throne inherit.” 410
 The Doctor bow’d, and (honest foul !)
 Walk’d off with *Pindar*, cheek-by-jowl.

“ Next,

“ Next,” said the PRINCE, “ our pleasure wait
 “ The *Secretaryships of State*,
 “ Come forward, then, whoe’er of ye
 “ In that good office wish to be.”

Fox and Lord *Stormont*, hand in hand,
 Rose up in haste at that command:
 The former quickly rush’d before,
 Lord *Stormont* follow’d rather slower.

420

Quoth *Fox*, “ Dear Sir, I do opine
 “ The place in question should be mine.
 “ My sev’ral merits have been known
 “ For many years all over town.
 “ First, I love bus’ness, and hate play,
 “ Abhor the lounging time away ;
 “ Though, on occasions, I have been
 “ By chance at gaming tables seen ;
 “ Yet you must not infer from thence
 “ I’m fond of gaming and expence.

430

“ Observe

“ Observe the Duke of *Bedford*; he
 “ Is not so frugal near as me.
 “ Besides, I have one merit more ;
 “ That is, I’ve held the place before.”

Lord *Stormont* thus, in solemn state,
 Began his speech deliberate :

“ Where can your Royal Highness find
 “ A more exalted turn of mind ?
 “ Where can you find a greater store
 “ Of ancient or of modern lore ?
 “ In none will you those talents see
 “ Near so conspicuous as in me.
 “ Since men their own opponents chuse,
 “ Some *Pitt*, and *Thurlow* some abuse,
 “ To high’r antagonists I climb,
 “ And make my speeches against time :
 “ So if you wish to cause delay,
 “ See whether *Stormont*’s in the way.”

440

E

“ He

He spoke,—and made a slow retreat,
In solemn silence, to his seat.

450

Rawdon in speaking him succeeded,
And his own cause thus ably pleaded :

“ With men like these for me to try,
“ Would argue great impolicy ;
“ But as I once, on t’other side,
“ For this same place to *Pitt* apply’d,
“ That’s the sole reason, I avow,
“ Why I arise to have it now.
“ Some languages I understand,
“ And I can write a good fair hand.
“ ’Twas I brought o’er, with much ado,
“ The *Arm’d Neutrality* to you ;
“ By dint of matchless eloquence ;
“ By reas’ning, argument, and sense.
“ In you, as *Portland* says, I’ll trust ;
“ A new-made REGENT should be just.”

460

“ If,”

“ If,” quoth the PRINCE, “ my Lord, you say

“ I should be just—this is the way :

“ You, *Fox*, and you, Lord *Stormont*, know

“ On ye this office I bestow. 470

“ Men, when they wish to gain their ends,

“ Must first reward their older friends :

“ So, *Rawdon*, you must rest content ;

“ Nor this refusal dare resent.”

As thus the PRINCE of WALES was speaking,

He heard a most prodigious squeaking ;

Two noisy creatures just come in,

Were the occasion of this din.

Enrag'd, he call'd the porter lout,

And bade him turn those monkeys out ; 480

But, to his great surprize, did see

'Twas *Lothian* and *Queenberry*.

The Duke was spokesman,—and with air

Submissive, thus began their pray'r :

" Humbly we bow before your feet,
 " And this poor favour do entreat ;
 " That you'd receive us in your graces,
 " And keep us in our present places :
 " Or if that is not in your pow'r,
 " Some choice employment on us shew'r. 490
 " You should not let remain supine
 " Activity and youth like mine.

" For this said place you're much too young,"
 " Reply'd the PRINCE ; " so hold your tongue :
 " While into office I instal
 " The *Gov'nor-Gen'ral of Bengal*.
 " *Francis* alone will fill that post,
 " And he is in himself an host.
 " *Francis* is sure a man of merit,
 " But wants a good revengeful spirit ; 500
 " And Mr. *Hastings* must confess,
 " That gratitude he does possess."

Lord

Lord *Rawdon*, who mean while fat by,
Like Satan in humility,
Rous'd at the mention of this word,
Demanded boldly to be heard.

" Since gratitude your Highness mentions,

" Hear for a moment my pretensions :

" For this same virtue I'm renown'd,

" And that the *Chancellor* has found ;

510

" For I was made by him a peer,

" And nobody's to me more dear."

" Stop—this is more than I can bear,"

Rejoin'd the PRINCE ; " so here I swear,

" That none of you shall gain your ends ;

" None but my older set of friends :

" Not *Lothian*, *Taylor*, *Queensberry*,

" Nor one of the *Arm'd Neutrality*,

" Except *Northumberland* alone,

" For reasons to myself best known,

520

" Though num'rous promises I granted,
 " When your assistance most was wanted,
 " Yet its too silly an idea
 " That I to break them now should fear.
 " Then hence, ye rats! ye venal crew!
 " I'm wearied at the sight of you.
 " As now the hour is rather late,
 " We'll meet to-morrow and debate:
 " Then other places I'll bestow
 " On those whose *principles* I know. 530
 " Hence then, ye unsuccessful sinners!
 " And we, my friends, will eat our dinners."

He finish'd ;—and to dress retreating,
 'Till the next day adjourn'd the meeting.
 And hasting to the sumptuous fare
 Which *Weltjie* had prepar'd with care,
 Laid royalty from off his brow,
 And got as drunk as David's fow.

Britannia

Britannia back to heaven flew,
 Bidding her native land adieu : 540
 Nor would she for a while return
 In Britain's island to sojourn ;
 'Till GEORGE again resume his pow'r,
 And Peace's gifts around him shew'r ;
 'Till he all party tumults quell,
 And low'ring Faction's clouds dispel.

Ye witlefs Rats, whoe'er ye be,
 Of mighty, or of low degree ;
 Who roll, like tides that meet the ocean,
 Sway'd by self-int'rest's double motion, 550
 Your fate this maxim well evinces,
 " *Place not your confidence in Princes.*"

F I N I S.

Britain's back to heaven flow,
Bidding her native land adieu;
Nor would she for a while remain
In Britain's land to tarry;
'Till Gaea again return his bow,
And Peace's gifts around him throw;
'Till he all party tumults quell,
And low-lying Faction's clouds dispel.

Ye wide'st Rans, whose'er ye be,
Of mighty, or of low degree;
Who roll, like tides that meet the ocean,
Sway'd by self-doubtful motion,
Your fate this man will convince,
"Place not your confidence in Princes."

